651 was the extent or position of the lands to be cultivated
656 specified. The ryot used his implements whenever and wherever he pleased. No restrictions, even on the felling of forests, were imposed, so that the hill-sides and valleys were cleared at will. The system was abolished in 1862. But, during the settlement, I found this erkādu kothukādu system still in force in the flourishing Badaga village of Kinnakorai, with some fifty houses."

622 In connection with the local self-government of the Badagas, Mr. A. Rajah Bahadur Mudaliar writes to me as follows. "In former days, the monegar was a great personage, as he formed the unit of the administration. The appointment was more or less hereditary, and it generally fell to the lot of the richest and most well-to-
622 do. All disputes within his jurisdiction were placed
627 before him, and his decision was accepted as final. In simple matters, such as partition of property, disputes between husband and wife, etc., the monegars themselves disposed of them. But, when questions of a com-
622 plicated nature presented themselves, they took as their
623 colleagues other people of the villages, and the disputes
627 were settled by the collective wisdom of the village elders. They assembled at a place set apart for the purpose beneath a nīm (*Melia Azadirachta*) or pīpal tree (*Ficus religiosa*) on a raised platform (ratchai), generally situated at the entrance to the village. The monegar was *ex-officio* president of such councils. He and the committee had power to fine the parties, to excommunicate them, and to readmit them to the caste.
622 Parents resorted to the monegar for counsel in the dis-
584 posal of their daughters in marriage, and in finding brides for their sons. If any one had the audacity to run counter to the wishes of the monegar in matters

matrimonial, he had the power to throw obstacles in the way of such marriages taking place. The monegar, in virtue of his position, wielded much power, and ruled the village as he pleased." In the old days, it is said, when he visited any village within his jurisdiction, the monegar had the privilege of having the best women or maids of the place to share his cot according to his choice. In former times, the monegar used to wear a silver ring as the badge of office, and some Badagas still have in their possession such rings, which are preserved as heirlooms, and worshipped during festivals. The term monegar is, at the present day, used for the village revenue official and munsiff.

I gather that each exogamous sept has its headman, called Gouda, who is assisted by a Parpattikāran, and decides tribal matters, such as disputes, divorce, etc. Fines, when inflicted, go towards feasting the tribe, and doing pūja (worship) to the gods. In the case of a dispute between two parties, one challenges the other to take an oath in a temple before the village council. A declaration on oath settles the matter at issue, and the parties agree to abide by it. It is the duty of the Parpattikāran to make arrangements for such events as the Heththeswāmi, Devvē and Bairaganni festivals, and the buffalo sacrificing festival at Konakkore. The Parpattikāran takes part in the purification of excommunicated members of the tribe, when they are received back into it, for example, on release from prison. The tongue of the delinquent is burnt with a hot sandal stick, and a new waist thread put on. He is taken to the temple, where he stands amidst the assembled Badagas, who touch his head with a cane. He then prostrates himself at the feet of the Parpattikāran, who smears his forehead with sacred ashes. It is, further, the duty of

881 night, and returns home on the following day clad in new cloths, leaving the old ones in the hut. When she arrives at her house, she salutes all the people who are there, and receives their blessing. On Sunday she goes to the houses of her relations, where she is given kadalai (*Cicer arietinum*) and other food. She may not enter the inner apartment of her house until she has seen the
841 crescent moon. Badaga women observe five days menstrual pollution. If a woman discovers her condition before washing her face in the early morning, that day is included in the pollution period. Otherwise, the period
(515) must be prolonged over six days. On the third day she
(824) bathes in cold water, using the bark of *Pouzolzia* (thorekōlu), and on the fourth day is allowed a change of clothing after a bath. On this day she leaves the hut, and passes a portion of the night in the verandah of her house. After cooking and eating her evening meal, she bathes, and enters the outer room. Early on the following morning, the spot which she has occupied is cleaned, and she bathes in a stream. Returning home, she eats her food in the outer room, where she remains till next morning. Even children may not be touched by a menstruating woman. If, by chance, this happens, the child must be washed to remove the pollution, before it can be handled by others. This restriction is apparently not observed by any other tribe or caste.

584 Writing concerning marriage among the Badagas, Harkness states * that "it is said to be common for one who is in want of labourers to promise his daughter in
(583) marriage to the son or other relative of a neighbour not in circumstances so flourishing as himself. And, these engagements being entered into, the intended bridegroom

* *Op. cit.*

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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584 serves the father of his betrothed as one of his own
583 family till the girl comes of age, when the marriage is consummated, and he becomes a partner in the general property of the family of his father-in-law."

582 A man may marry a girl belonging to the same
612 village as himself, if he and she are not members of the
621 same exogamous sept. In most cases, however, all the inhabitants of a village are of the same sept, and a man has to take as his wife a girl from a village other than his own.

583 Among all sections of the Badagas, adult marriage is the general rule, though infant marriage is also practised.

584 Marriage is preceded by a simple form of courtship, but the consent of the parents to the union is necessary. A girl does not suffer in reputation if she is rejected by a number of suitors, before she finally settles down.

585 Except among the Udayas, the marriage ceremony is of
[184] a very simple nature. A day or two before that fixed for taking the girl to the house of her husband-elect, the latter proceeds to her village, accompanied by his brothers, who, as a token of respect, touch the feet of all the Badagas who are assembled. The bride is taken to the house of the bridegroom, accompanied by the Kota band. Arrived there, she stands at the entrance, and her mother-in-law or sister-in-law brings water in a vessel, and pours it into her hands thrice. Each time she lets the water fall over her feet. The mother-in-law then ties round her neck a string of beads (māle mani), and leads her to the outer room (edumane), where cooked sāmai (*Panicum miliare*) and milk is given to her. This she pretends to eat, and the bridegroom's sister gives her water to wash her hands with. The bride and two married women or virgins (preferably the bridegroom's sisters) go to a stream in procession, accompanied by the

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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discover that an adolescent couple related in this acceptable way have become lovers, they try to persuade the two to marry. Should the girl become pregnant this pressure becomes very great.

It is said that prior to this century parents would make a pair of cross-cousins sleep together in a separate room before they were married. This was so that they might feel certain about their sexual compatibility. If one of them did not in fact like the idea of marrying the other, such an encounter might be arranged on some other pretext, solely in the hope that one cross-cousin would seduce the other and a marriage would result. A girl might even receive instructions from her mother on how to accomplish this and perhaps would be left by her mother at the boy's house for a night or two. Such practices led to hasty marriages, but are no longer followed.

A special kind of concubine-like relationship occurred until late in the nineteenth century. In those early times headmen had much more authority than subsequently, and local lore maintains that a headman visiting another village where he had to stay overnight would be offered his choice of the young village girls by the host headman. It was believed that a girl so favoured had special merit because of her physical connection with the prestigious visitor, and many men would therefore want to marry her. Although such a brief encounter was not expected to lead to a marriage with that headman, the chosen girl would normally have to be in an affinal relationship — i.e., tentative spouse — to the visitor.

(*b*) Second in frequency and relative acceptability is a sexual encounter within a joint family. Only two such relationships bear discussion, but genuine incest will be noted below under (*g*).

It is very rare for a man to have intercourse with his son's wife, even though a Badaga is generally more intimate in his relationship with her than more orthodox Hindus would be. What is common however is for a youth to have an affair with his elder brother's wife and doubtless in a few cases with a younger brother's wife. We have already pointed out (3.5) that an elder brother's wife may actually be called upon to provide a young man with his sexual initiation.

(*c*) The Toreyas have the lowest status of any Badaga phratry, except perhaps for the recently formed Christian one. With a few minor exceptions Badaga marriage occurs only *within* each of the ten phratries. Nonetheless there was a tendency to "hypergamy," if we may call it that, in extra-marital affairs. Toreya girls, and even

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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ness 1832: 42). It was also reported that some young men of dubious virtue were noted for the frequency with which they walked away (Francis 1908: 131-32).

Such freedom no longer finds parental connivance, and today a girl is expected to be a virgin at marriage. She may continue to be one for some time afterwards too, for it is usually the mothers of the couple who decide when to "send them to the bed-house," as the euphemism goes. No such restrictions occur for a woman who has already been married before, and in one reported instance such a bride actually took the initiative on the first night by fondling her previously impotent groom until he was able to do what was expected of him.

In earlier times, a reliable informant estimated, a mere one or two per cent of men had relations with their brides prior to marriage, and this was because girls were married at about puberty. He also estimated that perhaps ten per cent of bridegrooms had had sexual relations before marriage with girls other than their brides. Another man who was married in 1930 asserted that his 12-year old bride lacked a hymen, but did not reach menarche until two months after marriage. This and similar anecdotes do at least suggest girls used to become sexually active around the age of 12; female education has probably elevated this age somewhat (but on the other hand it is not uncommon for young virgins to lack a hymen). In earlier times it used to be fairly common for girls of the well-to-do gentry families to marry as young as at 10 or 11 years. They tended to be well-fed and well-built girls, but menarche had not yet occurred. For the sake of form nonetheless such a bride would spend the usual five days in the menstrual hut prior to her wedding.

3.9. When the couple are especially young the boy's parents may place all sorts of barriers in the way of their consummating the marriage. This is common, and generally because the parents want the girl to work but not have children yet. Needless to say, the resourceful couple can outwit the parents in this matter, for example by an afternoon meeting while the rest of the household is out working in the fields. A more leisurely ruse is for the young husband to send his wife away to visit her father, and then to follow her after a short time. Since a bride is not supposed to do any work while visiting her parents, and since her husband is always welcome in their home, the couple will have plenty of time alone together while the rest of the family is working outside the house. And many Badaga villages have dense forest nearby.

5: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1989
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128 Badagas rank them in the social hierarchy.

The diagram overleaf (p. 53) is an elaboration of one given above (p. 46). Here again each rectangle represents one sib, and thin lines link the sibs which traditionally intermarry. The broken lines indicate abnormal marriages that occur only at rare intervals. The heavier lines mark the main subcultural divisions within the community, between vegetarians and meat-eaters, and between Lingayats and the other Saivites.

615 The majority of Badagas rank the Wodeyas as the highest phratry in the
(162) community (Francis 1908: 130-31). They occupy about a dozen hamlets scattered across the Nilgiris, some of them very close to the hamlets of other phratries; perhaps they number 3000 people. The Wodeyas, unlike the lower-ranking phratries, are divided into four named, exogamous sibs, several of which will be represented in the population of each of their hamlets. In some ways, therefore, the organization of the Wodeya phratry is like that of the next phratry, the Adikari-Kanakka-Haruva-Kaggusi grouping; for this too is made up of four named, exogamous sibs. The difference is that members of the various sibs in this second phratry do not typically inhabit the same hamlet, and may not intermarry with any one of the other three sibs.

582 Wodeya marriages are nearly always arranged between members of any
584 two of the four sibs; with the proviso that a man should not marry into a family in
615 which his mother's sister, mother's brother, father's sister or father's brother have married. But since the beginning of this century some marriages have been contracted with Wodeya Lingayat girls from the Mysore Plains, who are not Badagas at all. In a few cases Wodeyas have even been known to marry Kanakka girls.

for the real widower to marry a girl capable of adding a number of sons to the family. Thus, provided the previous wife's funeral has been handled in this manner, it is considered ethical for the widower to marry a putative virgin from another family of the gentry.

Generally all of the headmen and headmen's regular assistants belong to the gentry; and during the last century the British officials normally appointed their managers and karnams (i.e. headmen and accountants) from among the gentry too (Grigg 1880: 366).

In keeping with the image of his greater honor, wisdom and prestige, a member of the gentry receives rather different treatment than an ordinary man at the hands of the Badaga judicial council. Traditional Badaga law holds the individual responsible for his acts, and treats him as the offender if he is found guilty of some crime. Among the gentry, on the other hand, the head of the family is responsible for the acts of all members of his family even though he may know nothing about them. This was vividly illustrated by a case in 1963, which I will quote from my field-notes.

"Belli is the traditional headman of a Badaga hamlet and, as he is the eldest of several brothers, he is also head of his family, which is considered a gentry family. One day he met his friend Lingan, a prominent elder from the neighboring hamlet. They were on a footpath in the fields belonging to Lingan's people. Without any prior explanation or greeting, Lingan abused Belli roundly for his despicable behavior. Belli was taken aback, and questioned him about the meaning of this outburst. He thus learned that one of his brothers had just kicked a Tamilian boy employed by the neighboring hamlet to look after their cattle. Normally Lingan would not have concerned himself with a minor hurt done to a non-Badaga in his hamlet; but in this case, because the boy was employed by the hamlet

118 little, changing criteria in marriage arrangements have nevertheless made a pro-
583 found impact. The appearance of dowry transactions in a society which previously demanded only a type of bride-price is the most outstanding instance of a whole complex of changing criteria.

583 In arranging a marriage, the boy's family always pays honnu to the girl's
584 family before the wedding. Honnu thus has the character of a bride-price; but this is not a good English translation for the term. Today the honnu is two hundred rupees; in the 1930's and 1940's it was Rs. 150 (Ranga 1934: 3; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 250); at the beginning of this century it was about Rs. 100 (Tignous 1911: 119); early in the last century it was "on an average between twenty and twenty-five rupees" (Harkness 1832: 42), or "15 to 20 rupees" (Ward 1821: lxxi).
458 With rising prices the honnu has also been increasing steadily; yet it is not really thought of as a bride-price at all. The Badagas are explicit that the money is to
583 be spent on gold ornaments with which to bedeck the bride when she leaves her
585 own home to join her new husband; for without certain customary ornaments the marriage cannot be performed. Thus the groom's family ensure that the celebra-
586 tion will go ahead by supplying the cost of these gold ornaments. At a later time, if divorce occurs, the wife has to return to her husband the ornaments or the Rs. 200, together with any other "gifts" of clothing or jewelry that he may have made (Harkness 1832: 116-17; Metz 1864: 86-87; Thurston 1909: I, 105-06; Tignous 1911: 119).

583 The system of paying honnu still continues, but dowry has become an additional requirement in some recent marriages. The general reason for this is that young Badaga men show much greater variation both in their family's wealth
582 and in their own potentiality to earn than was true prior to this century. In earlier

554 871 farm the land rather than try to use their academic knowledge more profitably elsewhere.

It is these wealthy families who have led the way in introducing the idea 581 583 (178) (177) of brides bringing a handsome dowry to their grooms. The custom is well known to Badagas because the Tamilians and Kanarese typically practice it. Payment of dowry also seems appropriate when a boy's family has benefitted him with the prestigeful expense of a university education, for his high social status promises (871) secure support and enhanced status for the girl. While several hundred Badaga youths have now acquired college degrees, scarcely a dozen girls have. Hence nobody yet expects to be married to a girl whose intellectual training has gone beyond the high-school level. Girls, on the other hand, have a choice between secondary-educated and tertiary-educated husbands. Ability of a girl's father to pay a substantial dowry is one method of ensuring a prestigeful marriage with a college graduate, and so providing her with a husband capable of supporting her adequately in the changing conditions of the modern world. Dowry is not an old Badaga custom at all; but it is now fashionable in the context of what the Badagas conceive to be modern India.

582 We must remember that the traditional marriage preference was for a cross-cousin; whether this was the father's sister's daughter or the mother's brother's daughter, a Badaga youth more often than not found her in the very hamlet where his married sister lived. This is still quite common today: either he marries his sister's husband's sister, or else a related neighbor of that husband. 584 The practical problems in finding go-betweens and arranging a marriage alliance can be resolved more easily in this way: the boy has the excuse of visiting his sister while getting a chance to contact and evaluate prospective brides, and the

fathers of those girls can feel more secure about arranging a marriage with a family already linked to the hamlet through previous marriages. A reciprocal exchange of women between two sibs -- and specifically between these two hamlets -- thus becomes a more tangible and acceptable pattern of behavior.

The intrusion of a demand for dowry into this situation can be an unpleasant change: two families, lineages or hamlets which have exchanged several daughters in marriage have established an alliance which proclaims their social equality. If one side seeks dowry it may rupture the stability they have achieved over a period of several generations; for dowry is taken to imply a kind of social inequality between the two parties. Paying dowry for a progressive, educated groom is like purchasing security for one's daughter.

The reciprocal nature of alliances and the traditions of Badaga marriage are still being adhered to as far as possible. For this reason, if no other, the payment of dowry is supposed to be a "secret", and the recipient of it is still obliged to pay the Rs. 200 honnu. Among those who are wealthy enough to demand or pay a dowry, however, fulfilment of their traditional roles in Badaga society can become a problem-laden, even anachronistic, burden. Some of these men now command annual incomes a hundred or more times greater than the average income of other men in their home village. As a consequence of this newly risen inequality the wealthy are constantly being plagued by importunate villagers and distant relatives, as well as Toda and Kota friends, who try to activate the traditional bonds of friendship or kinship in order to maximize their share in the power and influence of the nouveaux riches. It is therefore not surprising to find that the wealthiest Badagas have been the first to leave their natal village and build themselves comfortable houses in the towns or in the middle of their tea estates.

4. Visiting the Relatives: A Kin-based Institution

All Badagas are expected by their families to visit affinal and agnatic relatives with some regularity. The effect of this requirement is to keep the joint family ideal alive even after a household has broken up, and to sustain the ties with affines from whom one may at any time need either a spouse or a loan of money.

One such rule is that all Badagas must eat with their close relatives at least once a year. "Close relatives" here means those with whom one is involved in the performance of family ceremonies: it hence includes both one's closer agnates and some affines. Accordingly, a family either sends a message that the members are coming to visit some relatives, or will send an invitation for them to visit instead; and such visits involve minimally the eating of one meal. Everybody recognizes that if relatives do not eat together within a twelve-month period, it means that there is some ill-feeling between them. Steps may even be taken by village elders to locate and rectify the source of the friction, so that it may not impede the performance of ceremonies later on. There may of course be other reasons, such as distance or occupation, which make it impossible for relatives to get together; in this case they may still send gifts of food to each other once a year. In the modern day when business or study obligations can make these family feasts difficult to attend, some Badagas go so far as to prepare a special foodstuff before the twelve-month period since the last such feast has elapsed, a foodstuff which can be kept indefinitely and be fed to relatives whenever convenient, even after the twelve-month period is over.

A man visiting his wife's natal home is always an important guest whether or not he has received an invitation to come. Her family are all very respectful to him for fear he decrease the amount of his wife's contacts with them, which he is certainly in a position to do. For all family ceremonies or festivals in their village, they make sure he is among the first to be invited. When younger siblings of his wife are ready for marriage, he is consulted about a spouse, and may intensify the ties between the two families by suggesting his own sibling or parallel cousin. Hence, any villagers noticing that a man does not attend the ceremonies in which his wife's father is involved will conclude that he is snubbing his father-in-law for some reason.

Visits in the other direction, to the house of a married daughter or sister, are much more circumscribed. Her parents will not go to her husband's home without a good reason. They will however make occasional visits there just to emphasize the bond between the two families and to show that the parents still have affection for their daughter. Her brothers should equally have an invitation or a definite purpose for visiting her. In general, her natal family consider it rather lacking in dignity to visit her too often, and they will try to restrict the visits of any brother who seems especially fond of her. Her husband's family may well feel that very frequent visits from her brothers waste a woman's working time and can even become something of an economic drain.

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AN50 Badaga AN50

in its marriage network down to manageable proportions. There is definitely an ideal and a strong tendency towards reciprocity between two Badaga villages in the exchange of women. Thus 67% of all wives found in Hulla:ḍa in 1963 came from the first four villages named in Table 3. 78% of the daughters married away from Hulla:ḍa who still maintained social ties there were also living in those same four villages. This reciprocity is felt to be the responsibility of each lineage, and it is to some extent reflected in the data of Table 4 concerning the marriage patterns of each Hulla:ḍa lineage. (For simplicity, only the villages with which Hulla:ḍa was linked by more than 20 marriages in 1963 have been included.) This table shows that at that time Naḍu Mane lineage had a perfect record of reciprocity with those villages. O:sa Mane and the "Outsiders" (relatively recent settlers from elsewhere) manifest at least a tolerable degree of reciprocity. In fact, complete reciprocity is not often attainable because nubile women may not be available in a particular village when needed for a marriage, or required in Hulla:ḍa when available elsewhere. When a lineage has sent a disproportionately greater number of women in marriage to another village than it has received brides from that place, a sense of uneasiness with the situation is usually felt.

TABLE 4

Reciprocity in Marriage, by Lineages

Hulla:ḍa Lineages	Women from	Known women to	Women from	Known women to	Women from	Known women to
	Tumanaṭṭi		Mainele		Kundasappe	
Doḍḍa Mane	3	1	3	0	2	1
Me:l Ke:ri	9	1	5	0	2	3
Naḍu Mane	3	3	4	4	3	3
O:sa Mane	6	4	7	5	2	3
"Outsiders"	8	4	2	3	2	3

Cross-cousin marriage does sometimes take the form of sister exchange, an ideally reciprocal arrangement. If a young man does not marry his ZHZ (who might be either a MBD or FZD to him), he commonly marries a related neighbour of his ZH. This alliance offers an easy resolution to the practical problem of finding a go-between and arranging the alliance: the youth has the excuse of visiting his married sisters while getting a chance to contact and evaluate prospective brides in their village, and the fathers of these girls can feel more secure about arranging a marriage with a family already linked to their village and perhaps the joint family through previous marriages.

If more than one have to receive the *Linga* on the same day each of them has to undergo this ceremony. After the ceremony is over the priest returns to his village with the rice, &c., and fees. Every house in which a boy has received the *Linga* has to give a grand feast that day. Even the poorest Badaga must feed five other Badagas at least.

Thus closes the Lingu-wearing ceremony of the Badaga boy, after which he passes through no additional ceremony. He spends his time now in milking the buffaloes, now in the fields, and is thus always preparing himself to become in the future the responsible head of a Badaga family.

Before we speak of the ceremonies connected with the courtship and marriage of a Badaga youth and of those which are due to him at the time of and after his death, which we shall dwell upon at their proper place, we shall turn our attention to a Badaga female-child and trace her from her birth to her marriage. As soon as a female-child is born, some of her relations who are in a position to contract a marriage relationship bespeak the baby, and arrange for her to be married at the proper age to such and such a boy. In consideration of this they give Rs. 10 as a fee. This is everything to the girl and her price cannot afterwards be enhanced even though when she grows up she may be worth more—even as much as Rs. 200 which is the highest rate prevailing among them. Even when a girl is thus bespoken, all the forms connected with the courtship and marriage which I am about to describe are observed except the one of handing over the price of the girl, which in such a case has already been paid. This custom of contracting relationship is rare but it does occur in ten out of a hundred cases. Violations of this kind of marriage are considered very ungentlemanly but they are not infrequent. The fine for such violations is after all very light, being merely the return of the Rs. 10 formerly paid for the girl when the infant was bespoken.

Let us now go back to the baby and suppose her not to be thus bespoken. She has no rites or any observances to undergo till she becomes of a marriageable age. She then leaves her parents' house and goes to a building called the *Hola-Gudi*. This *Hola-Gudi* is a public place reserved exclusively for women and grown up girls, and is a building that every Badaga village contains. She is presented with a new cloth by her parents and remains in the *Hola-Gudi* till the next full-moon day. All the families in the village bring to her one measure of wheat or *Korali* flour from each

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
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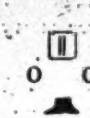
house every day, and all the girls of the village assemble there, cook and eat together. On the morning of the next full-moon day she bathes, receives again a new cloth from her parents and sits outside the house till the hour when the moon rises in the evening. When she sees the moon appear above the horizon she enters her house. Five old females accompany her and conduct her into the house, where the mother standing at the threshold thus welcomes her daughter back, saying,—

Gaṇdettu, makkettu, mane kaṭṭi sukhavâgi badu-kammâ baduku, meaning:—May you, my darling, soon receive a husband, bring forth a son, build your own house and live happy.

The mother now gives her a dish containing rice, milk and curds. This is done in the outer house, for the girl is all this time only at the threshold and has not yet entered the inner house. After eating a little of what has been given her by her mother she has to proceed to every house in the village, the eldest female member of which pronounces upon her the same blessing and gives her the same dish to eat. She receives these and pretends to eat a mouthful in every house and then returns home. The mother now stands waiting anxiously her daughter's return. She takes her girl in, and now the pots and other utensils of the family may be touched. This closes this ceremony, the only one that a woman has to undergo before her marriage, and a few days after it is performed the mark which proclaims to the whole Baḍaga world that the girl is of a marriageable age is put on her forehead. It consists of four different dots, thus:—



It is called technically among them *Haṛil-hâkulvadu*, meaning tatooing the head, but I have not been able to find any one who could explain to me the meaning of these dots. I surmise that they are the end marks of a trident, the favourite weapon of Śiva. As soon as this mark is put upon a girl's forehead it is a caste proclamation, as it were, that any one may claim her hand in marriage, and that the young Baḍaga in search of a wife may pay a visit to her father's house.

In the Uḍaya class there is nothing of the nature of courtship, but the father settles the bride or bridegroom for his child. The girl to be married is brought to the village in which the boy chosen

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
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S85 lives, and is kept in a separate house. A good day is fixed for the marriage. Pandals are erected, grand preparations go on and the marriage takes place in the regular way that we shall describe presently. Among all the other Badagas what may be called court-
S84 ship prevails. Child marriages never take place among Badagas,
[184] though, as we have seen, a child is often bespoken for marriage from the very day of its birth.

In the other Badaga castes the parents have nothing to do in the preliminary arrangements of a marriage settlement. The young Badaga leaving home always takes a friend with him when going
S84 out in search of a wife. He has to observe certain omens on his
787 way to the girl's house. The sight of flesh or an empty pot or a single jackal is always considered a bad omen. Filled pots or a pair of jackals coming from an opposite direction is considered a good omen, indicating a happy union. Thus the way and the nature of the omens are the first points to be observed, and to see that the anxious young man in search of a wife does not ignore these facts, a friend, but really a spy, tracks him to the house of the girl whom
S84 he intends to ask to marry him. The parents or the other elder relatives of the girl understand from the presents which the youth brings, and from the friend by whom he is accompanied, that he has come in search of a wife, and they leave the young pair to meet and be happy in each other's company. The young man spends four or five days there, and if the girl is to his liking he temporarily takes leave of his future wife's relations and returns home in haste to complete the marriage arrangements. If the pair do not like each other, that they shall never marry each other is settled then and there, and that is the end of it.

When they like each other, the young man, as we have seen, returns to his parents, and sends them, or some other elder relatives if his parents are not alive, to settle the marriage. These proceed to the girl's house and falling at the feet of the parents of the girl request them to give her in marriage to their son. Generally the mother of the boy asks her future daughter-in-law whether she will marry her son and tells her that she has plenty to eat or as she would put it—*Timbadu nîngénu koravillâ*. The girl respectfully replies that she will do as her parents order, and, though she has almost always been carefully tutored up, her answer appears to be given in an extremely natural and simple manner.

S85 A day is then fixed, and the marriage is always performed in the bridegroom's house. Five, nine or thirteen women relatives

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dynasty of Madura. To these Nâyakkas or Vaḍugas the Baḍagas were allied, and they were thus originally the Śûdras of the Maisûr country. They were, however, completely Âryanised before they commenced their march three centuries ago to the district where they now live, and it is therefore not surprising that they should have brought with them many of the ancient Âryan institutions.

Chief among these may be noted the system of local self-government that even yet exists among them though in an impaired form. From the traces that are still left it is evident that the village community system prevailed among them in a complete state in the old days of their settlement on the Nîlagiris.

Each village has a head man called the Monegar. He is generally the richest man in the village, and is regarded as the highest authority upon all subjects. Before the year 1820, while the Nîlagiri district had not yet been made a separate district but only formed a single tâlûk in the Coimbatore district, the power of these Monegars was much greater than it is now. At that time communication was difficult and much of the Nîlagiris had not yet been opened up, and in the different villages the Monegar was the paramount power. Stories are current even to the present day of a Monegar of one village who ordered an individual who had disobeyed his orders to be covered with a slab of stone. Unless the disobedience was of a most flagrant nature and really amounted to a determined disregard of constituted authority, such a high-handed exercise of autocratic power must have been resented by the people, for the Monegar was not an irresponsible autocrat, but a ruler holding his power by the goodwill of the whole community. The British Government has made these Monegars officials in connection with the revenue administration of the villages, but apart from this they still have certain important duties to perform in connection with the social life of the Baḍaga community. In all religious and social questions the Baḍagas go to the village Monegar. If the question is a simple one he settles it himself, if it is intricate he calls a village council to which the elders of the village are summoned. After taking their opinion he passes an order which must be obeyed, for his word is law.

Questions of partition, of cultivation and of outcasting, disputes and other minor matters, are thus settled by the village council with the Monegar as its head. It is, however, in questions arising in connexion with marriage that the Monegar and his council play their most important part. When a girl in one village is going to

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622 be married to a boy in another village, the parents of the young
584 people have to represent the matter to the Monegars of their
[623] respective villages. This is done after the courtship stage has been reached and the young people have agreed to marry one another, but even then if for any reason the Monegar forbids the contracting of the marriage the matter must at once stop, and no appeal to any higher authority is possible. Such a thing rarely occurs, but when it does there is no remedy, except that it may be possible to induce the Monegar to alter his decision by means of a judiciously administered bribe.

595 Owing to the existence of polyandry and ideas connected with it, things that would be regarded by other peoples as the gravest offences against morality are tolerated or even approved of by
622 Badaga public opinion. Offences against the curious rules for the
627 regulation of family life that obtain among the Badagas are brought
681 to the village Monegar, who punishes the culprits by inflicting fines upon them. But however lax the Badagas may be in their ideas of morality within the family, they regard with the greatest dis-
622 pleasure and visit with the severest punishment any one who goes
627 astray with a person of another caste, even though he be of the Brah-
684 man caste. The village Monegar conducts an enquiry, and if he finds the guilt of the accused person proved, he pronounces sentence of excommunication, and the unfortunate woman loses her caste and is driven from the community.

622 The village Monegar is also president of the divorce court—for,
627 as was stated in my previous article, divorce, which is not uncommon
586 in the Badaga community, can, after the cord-tying ceremony has been performed, be granted only by a regular decision of the Mone-
[623] gar and his village council. If a man and his wife do not like one another they have to bring the matter before the Monegar. He assembles a court, and himself acting as its president sanctions a
586 separation or deals with the matter otherwise. If separation is ordered the person who is to take the divorced woman as his wife returns the *Stla hayd* or cloth money (Rs. 1½), and the price originally paid to her by her first husband. The children, if there be any, belong to the father. The woman if she dislikes her second husband may apply for a second separation. Society does not look upon her as a bad woman because of these divorces or separations, and recognises all her children as lawfully born Badagas.

621 One more illustration may be given of the functions of the Mone-
622 gar and the village council. If any Badaga family becomes very
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